

Washington, DC - “Envision this □ an undocumented immigrant suffers severe abdominal pain and finds himself in the emergency room of the nearby hospital.

The first order of business for the emergency physician, or nurse, or whoever happens to be attending to this patient is NOT to ask them where it hurts and do a physical exam to see if their life is imminently in danger, but to ask their immigration status, and get a sworn statement to that effect.

And, if that patient cannot prove their legal status, that same doctor must make the choice not to provide care to this person, or they must at least report them to the immigration officials before providing life saving treatment. I ask you, what kind of choice is that?

What happens if that same immigrant decides not to seek care because of the potential consequences, and what could become a burst appendix leads to infection, more expensive care, or possibly death?

There is no humanity in the choice you are asking health care workers to make in this circumstance. They are no longer healers but immigration law enforcers.

What’s even more appalling is that the Republican Leadership chooses to pursue this course of action to deal with this country’s immigration problem, rather than look at the comprehensive immigration reform measures that have been introduced in the House.

If the Republicans are serious about reforming immigration, then take a look at the bill the Democrats introduced which would bring a sense of order and reason to the influx of immigrants into this country.

Let’s not jeopardize our entire public health system in this misguided attempt to bring down health care costs and deport undocumented workers.

This bill is an affront to our health care professionals and to the immigrant community in this country, which would no longer be able to get care without presenting their green card first.

I urge my colleagues to strongly reject this bill and send a message that using our health care system as a subagency of the Immigration Service is a ludicrous idea.

Esta propuesta es otro golpe a la comunidad inmigrante por parte de la administración Republicana que dice que son nuestros amigos. Esa clase de amigos no necesitamos los Latinos.”